

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

29 April 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for National Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM :
National Intelligence Officer for
China-East Asia Pacific

SUBJECT : Warning Assessment: China-East Asia Pacific

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The following items were discussed by the Community Representatives at the 23 April Warning Meeting.

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South Korea

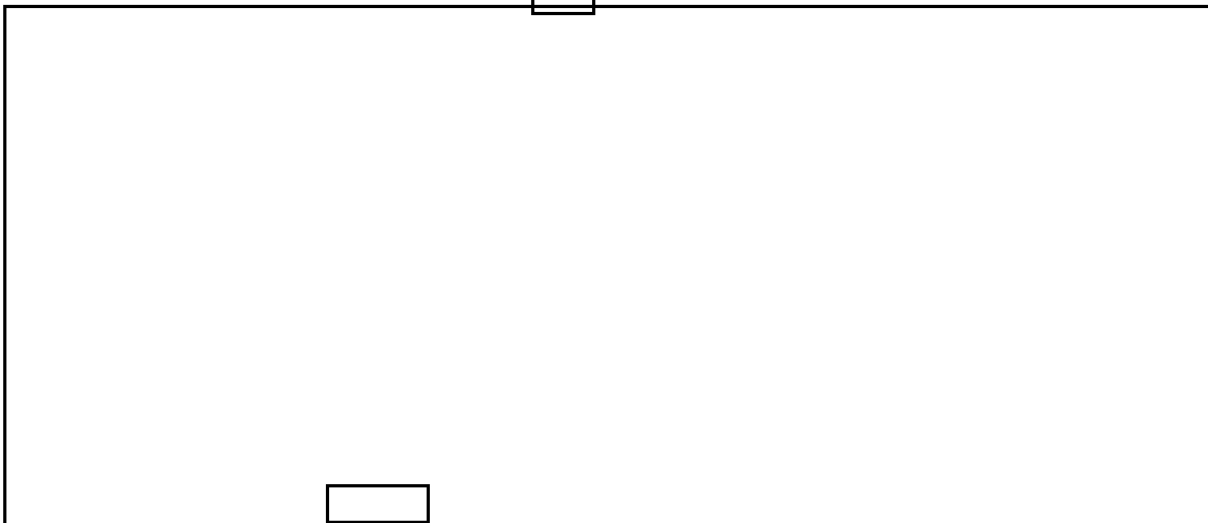
2. Military strongman General Chon Tu-hwan's appointment as Acting Director of the KCIA was seen as the next in a series of steps Chon has taken to increase his control and power in the complex set of relationships that currently describe the ROK government. In his frequent disclaimers of political ambition, Chon has encouraged us to watch what he does; this most recent exhibit, therefore, is all the more unreassuring. While our suspicions about Chon's aspirations cannot be confirmed at this point, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see him losing interest in the competition for political power in a post-Pak government. Analysts anticipated increased public awareness of Chon's role in the transition to political reform and a new government now that he has assumed the KCIA post. Labor and the students are certain to become more sensitive to indications of efforts by Chon to control the process and/or promote himself to the Presidency.

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Southeast Asia

3. Thailand -- Analysts noted signs of disunity and indecision in the new Prem government, but generally concluded it was too early to conclude that these symptoms would lead to an early demise of Prem. There was considerable discussion of indications that Bangkok -- as well as Malaysia and Indonesia -- were rethinking their options with regard to continuation of support for Pol Pot, refusal to compromise with Vietnam, and close cooperation with China. There was general agreement that the Malaysian and Indonesians were hoping for a compromise with Hanoi, but analysts differed as to whether there was any real likelihood of a change in Thai policy. All agreed that the key to movement would be real policy changes on the part of the Vietnamese (making it possible for others to compromise), and it was generally concluded that Hanoi, while perhaps making some cosmetic gestures, was likely to remain wedded to current policy for some time to come. ☐



China

5. Internal Developments -- Analysts touched briefly on the recent NPC standing committee session, noting that it had carried through on matters foreshadowed by the Fifth Central Committee Plenum. They were generally relaxed about the internal political situation, noting that the policy line favored by Deng Xiaoping appeared all the more firmly established. ☐

6. Sino-Soviet Developments -- Participants in the meeting also saw little evidence of change in this sphere. They generally discounted faint signs of Soviet "reasonableness" as protective measures prior to Vice Premier Geng Biao's visit to the US. They also saw little signs of change on the Chinese side. ☐

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7. Sino-Vietnamese Developments -- Analysts had little new to discuss on this topic. They noted that China had ceased to document regularly complaints of border clashes with the Vietnamese, but saw little real significance in this trend. They noted that there had been virtually no significant change in the forces deployed on either side of the border. ☐

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